LOADSTAR LETTER #22

May 1995 Companion newsletter for LOADSTAR #132
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Check It Out!
LOADSTAR's BBS! 1-318-425-4382
Online support • 2400/8n1 • U.B.A.N. Network

Complete Confusion over the Compleat Programmer

LOADSTAR's Tech support department has been deluged with returned 3.5-inch disks. The Compleat Programmer is shipped on four 5.25-inch disks (8 sides) and on two 3.5-inch disks. As with the 5.25-inch disks, and any regular issue of LOADSTAR, we include the menu system on each disk so that users are not locked into booting from Side 1. The confusion comes when people boot Disk 2 and find themselves unable to immediately access anything in the menu. This is because naturally Disk 1 items are going to be at the top of the menu. Disk 2 items are mainly in the very bottom "ware" or software category. Just as with a regular LOADSTAR issue, you can't boot Side 4 and try to LOAD programs on Side 1 without Side 1 in the drive.

Interestingly enough no 5.25-inch Compleat programmers have been returned, even though there are 8 sides and potential for four times the confusion.

Please! Don't return your disks! At Softdisk, we don't re-use disks that have been returned to us. We have no need for them. What we ask of our customers is to please call and ask for assistance first. If they can determine over the phone that you have a bad disk or a mislabelled disk, they'll gladly ship a correct disk. Softdisk has spent thousands of dollars re-shipping perfectly fine disks with specific instructions on how to make them work. This is because many people will become a little confused and mail the disks right back before calling us. Please call our technical support department first.

And The Band Played On

Issue #136 will mark our 11th year of continuous publication. This is a milestone for any computer mag. Alas, with LOADSTAR being a Commodore magazine, the mainstream press could care less. Don't expect to hear about this on CNN.

LOADSTAR LETTER Back Issues Generally Not Available

Every month we get calls from new subscribers who want back issues of the LOADSTAR LETTER. The problem is that every month we print up just enough newsletters to meet our needs. In fact there are a couple of newsletters that even I (Jeff) don't have except on my hard drive.

Online Opportunity On Delphi?

Custom Forum is a service for personal online networking which enables you to create your own service or "bulletin board" right on DELPHI.

With a Custom Forum, you have the ability to exchange messages with specialized groups of DELPHI members -- either small personal groups or interest groups for any members that wish to join in!

Features Of A Custom Forum

Custom Forums offer a variety of features regularly available through DELPHI, including access to related discussion groups on the Internet -- the world's largest network of computers, information and people! Custom Forum features include:

o Forum - a powerful electronic "bulletin board" or message area that can be divided into sub-topics to organize message threads and allow controlled access to information

o Usenet Discussion Groups - access to active discussions taking place among thousands of users on the Internet, on thousands of different topics, many which may relate to your Custom Forum's purpose

o Database - a file storage area where members of the forum can access files and programs related to your Custom Forum, and

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post their own files for others to share

o Conference - an interactive "chat" feature enabling real-time online discussions with several members at any time

o Mail - a direct connection to the DELPHI electronic mail system, where members can send mail to virtually any computer network in the world via the Internet, or send a friendly "Hello" to their friend online

Choose among the above features and tailor your Custom Forum to the needs of your group or interest!

There are no extra charges for using a custom forum. There are only charges to set up and operate a forum.

To create your own forum, select "Starting Your Own Forum" from this same menu. To participate in an existing forum, review the directory listing and submit an application for access. Some small-group forums may not be listed in the directory but can be accessed by applying directly to the forum Host.

Please use the "Feedback" option to send your comments and suggestions about Custom Forums.

Add your own personal touch to DELPHI. Start a Custom Forum today!

HOST PRIVILEGES: Any DELPHI member in good standing can start and operate a Custom Forum. This person is referred to as the forum "Host." The Host has special privileges including:

1. Control over the Custom Forum access level and membership list. You decide whether your Custom Forum will be open to all DELPHI members, open to only those who apply for access, or open to only those you choose to allow access. If your Custom Forum is for a special interest, you may want anyone on DELPHI to have access. If it is for a national organization, you may wish to require that potential members apply for access to qualify them for membership. If it is meant as a gathering place for family members, you can choose to give access to family members only. You'll also have access to a "lock out" feature if individual members become disruptive.

2. Control over topics, enabling multi-level access to information. Forums can be divided into as many as 16 "topics" which help to organize the forum. Topics can also be used to establish multiple levels of access to information in the forum. As the Host, you can determine which topics will be opened or closed, and assign members access to closed topics as you wish.

3. Editorial control over the content and quality of the Custom Forum. As the Host, you have the ability to edit or delete forum messages or polls which are either inappropriate, outdated or incorrect. You can also edit your own list of Usenet Discussion Groups accessible from your Custom Forum.

4. Ability to create and edit online banners. Spruce up your Custom Forum with banners throughout the menus. Main banners area great place to announce important news and special upcoming events. Conference banners can remind your members of regularly scheduled conferences or meeting times. Forum might be used to point members to message "threads" of significant interest to members.

Custom Forums carry a minimal one-time setup fee of $29.95 and a monthly maintenance fee of $5.00 This fees are billed to one person only -- the Host. All people interested in using the forum simply pay DELPHI's standard membership and connect fees.

New Member Referral Credits: Any Host can earn money through DELPHI's referral program. For an additional $20, DELPHI will create a unique signup code for the Host to promote to potential DELPHI members. For each new member who joins as a result of the Host's promotional effort and remains a member for at least 30 days, the Host will receive a $10.00 credit on the following month's statement. The Host will be able to see a list of members for whom he or she was given credit on each month's statement.

Reduced costs for increased usage: DELPHI tracks the usage of all Custom Forums each month. As usage of a Custom Forum increases, incentives are awarded according to the following schedule:

6,000 minutes/month: Custom Forum fee ($5) waived. 9,000 minutes/month: DELPHI Membership fee of $20 waived 20,000 minutes/month: Free access to the Custom Forum

If the Custom Forum continues to grow significantly, the Host can apply to expand the forum to a full-featured public special interest group on DELPHI. This includes the addition of a larger database, additional Internet features, a member directory, and customized features as needed.

The Host will also be paid a monthly management fee for managing the new Special Interest Group.

Using this path of growth, a forum Host can expand his/her special interest or expertise into a profitable and fun online business!

4-Scan Overview

An engineer who worked most of his life for a major photographic corporation has retired to Puerto Rico. There Ben Johnson indulges several hobbies. He enjoys astronomy. He grinds the lenses for his telescopes. He does portraits both with paint and with cameras. He has also applied this visual interest to the C-64/128. It may be not coincidental that his interests are visual, since he is close to legally deaf.

He for nearly ten years has developed scanners for the Commodore. His initial product linked through a fiber optic cable a

LOADSTAR'S COMPLEAT SHOP

The Compleat Dave: Two 1581 disks or three 1541 disks crammed with sid music. Over 250 Songs, all of them classic melodies from yesteryear, arranged and transcribed by the Master of Music and now they're available in one gigantic 8-hour collection. If you enjoy SID music, you owe it to yourself to get THE COMPLEAT DAVE. Two 1581 disks #070523 **Three 1541 disks #070525**

The Compleat Walt: During LOADSTAR's first ten years we have been proud to publish 24 of Walt Harned's slideshows and multimedia events. Now we've gathered them into one huge collection: seven 5.25 inch disks or three 3.5 inch disks! - and it's yours for the incredibly low price of $20. There are over 250 pictures in the collection, including some that have never been published. That's $20 total for the greatest one-man collection of art on any computer platform! Don't wait! These prices won't last forever. **5.25-inch disks order #070425 3.5-inch disks order #070423**

The Compleat Roger: 25 educational programs, each carefully crafted by Roger Norton, an educator who uses C-64's. These programs come crammed on two 5.25-inch 1541 disks or one 1581 disk. **5.25 set #0004D5 3.5-inch disk #0004D3**

The Compleat Programmer: Become the Commodore programmer you've always wanted to be! Megabytes of knowledge crammed and stuffed onto 8 5.25-inch disks or 2 1581 disks! Plus we include all the tools, extensions, languages, assemblers, tutorials and utilities you'll need to create the same type of software you see on LOADSTAR! **5.25 set #0005D5 3.5-inch disk #0005D3. For $5 more, get C= Hacking MAG (on 3.5-in disks only) to complete your programming set.**

The Compleat Maurice: A compilation of the 26 solitaire card games written by Maurice Jones, the acknowledged master of card game simulations for the C-64/128. There's even a brand new, never before published game called *Boomerang*. **Two 5.25 inch disks #0007D5 or one 3.5 inch disk #0007D3.**

Each product is $20.00 postage paid! Send Check or M.O. to:
Softdisk Publishing
Box 30008, Shreveport LA 71130-0008
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It lives. It breeds. It kills humans for...

S•P•O•R•T

A chilling C-64 novel on disk by Jeff Jones
"You can't hide in the dark..."

This is a full novel on disk. Over 500 pages. Presentation software included. Bookmarks. Warning! Strong Content. Frank language, violence and adult situations. If you don't love *real* horror novels, please don't buy this book.

$5.95 for any format:
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THE UNDERGROUND

The 8-bit, and now Laser Printed, Commodore Mini-Mag!

The Underground is a bi-monthly publication with articles featuring reviews, PD/Shareware, BASIC and machine language tutorials, Geos, telecommunications, international stuff, news and tips. The Underground is a publication created by people who refuse to let their 8-bit computers gather dust, and is priced low enough for even the most frugal users. Try a sample issue to see if the Underground is worth your while. You'll be glad you did.

Single Issue $2.00
Can/Mex $2.25 • International $3.75
One Year (six issues) $11.00
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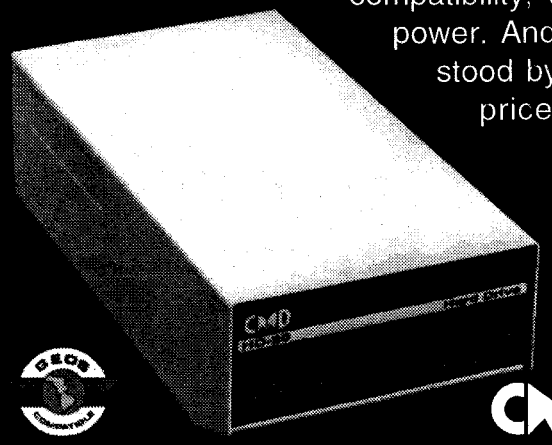
It's back. And it's cooler, faster and more affordable than ever...

You've waited a long time for this. The opportunity to own the finest peripheral equipment ever made for your system. You've listened while others talked of the speed, the convenience, the compatibility, and the power. And you've stood by as the prices have gradually dropped, year after year. But they never dropped quite low enough—until NOW! Because now, CMD has a limited number of brand new HD-20 hard drives available at a super low price. Not only that, but these drives employ a 2.5" SCSI mechanism that runs faster and cooler than ever before. If you've been waiting for an affordable HD, then don't miss



The Return of the CMD HD-20.

$299

To Order Yours, Call 1-800-638-3263.

See full CMD advertisement elsewhere in this issue for shipping prices.

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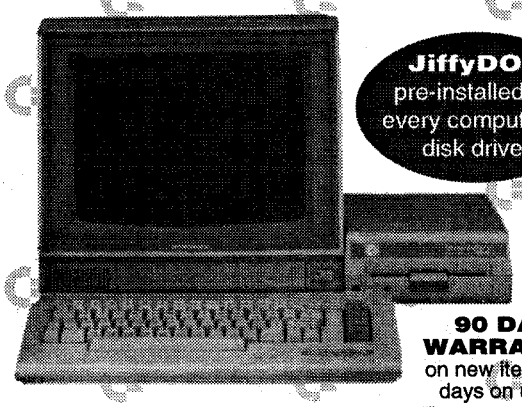

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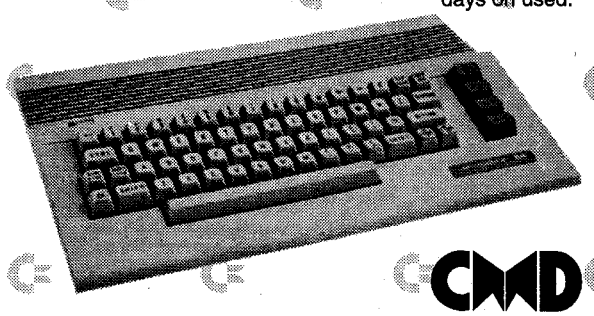
90 DAY WARRANTY on new items, 30 days on used.



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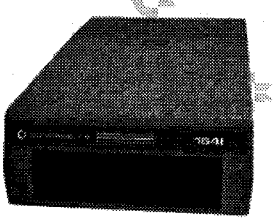

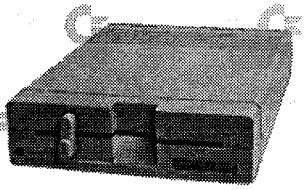

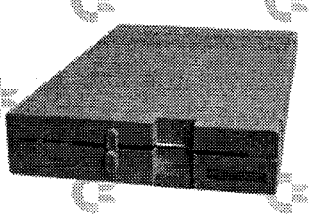

All items subject to availability, call before ordering. Prices subject to change without notice.

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FD-4000 (800K, 1.6 MB and 3.2 MB) $249.95
FD Real-Time-Clock Option $20.00
Box of 10, High Density Disks (1.6MB) $14.95
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(Specify computer and drive serial number)
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JiffyDOS C-128/128-D System $59.95
Additional Drive ROM's $24.95

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Samsung SP-0912 9-pin Epson-comp. Printer $149.00
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C-64/64-C Computers (NEW, w/ JDOS) $139.00
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Collette Utilities (Handy Geos Utilities) $19.95
Perfect Print LQ for GEOS (Laser-like output) $49.95
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geoShell V2.2 (CLI for GEOS) $24.95
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Increase Speed Up to 1500% while retaining 100% compatibility

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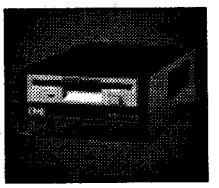
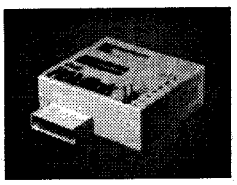
FD Series



3.2 and 1.6 MB 3.5" Floppy Drives

The FD-2000 and FD-4000 disk drives utilize today's latest 3.5 inch disk drive technology. FD-2000's support 800K (1581 style) and 1.6 MB (High Density) formats, while the FD-4000 also offers support for the 3.2 MB (Enhanced Density) disk format. Fast and reliable, they support 1541, 1571 and 1581 style partitions, Native Mode partitioning and can actually read and write 1581 disks. FD's feature built-in JiffyDOS, SWAP button and optional Real Time Clock. High capacity, speed and compatibility make the FD right for every application, including GEOS.

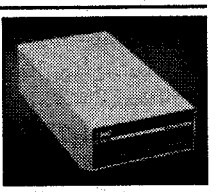


RAMLink

Power-Backed Expandable REU

The fastest possible form of storage, RAMLink provides instant access to files and retains data while your computer is turned off. Easy to use and expandable up to 16 MB, RAMLink utilizes the same powerful operating system found in CMD Hard Drives. Unlike Commodore REU's which are compatible with less than 1% of commercial software, RAMLink supports more than 80% of the commercial titles. RAMLink also offers built-in JiffyDOS Kernal, SWAP feature, reset button, enable/ disable switch, pass-thru port and RAM port for REU/GEORAM use. RAMLink offers maximum speed, expandability and compatibility with all types of software and hardware including GEOS.

HD Series



SCSI Hard Drive for the C-64/128

HD Series Hard Drives are available in capacities up to 1 GB, are fully partitionable, and can emulate 1541, 1571, & 1581 disks while Native partitions utilize MSDOS-style subdirectories. HD's connect easily to the serial bus or parallel via RAMLink. Includes built-in JiffyDOS, SWAP feature and RTC. HD's offer superior compatibility with most commercial software including BBS, Productivity and GEOS. And with new pricing, HD Series drives offer the lowest cost per megabyte of any C64/128 storage device.

Shipping and Handling Charges

Use the chart below to match your order subtotal with your shipping zone and method.

	Continental United States					
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Creative Micro Designs, Inc.
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C-64 to a typewriter and used the typewriter keys to create an image. More recently he has used the same hardware to operate a printer. Equally important, it is now possible to save the files created.

4 SCAN places a diode on the printer head. The fiber optic cable attaches to the computer at the same port that the modem uses. The picture to be scanned is placed in the printer as a single page would be using friction feed. The printer head with ribbon removed, moves across the page in incremental steps. Each time that it stops, the diode takes a snapshot of what is on the picture at that location. Picture resolution is therefore mainly a function of how often the printer head stops in moving across the picture. My Epson Homewriter 10, which emulates a 1525, stops every tenth of an inch. Many printers, including most of the Panasonic and Star series, stop twice as often. They can both provide twice the definition that I can o n a large picture, and make sense of images half the size of ones that I can deal with.

Ben is most interested in portraits. He tells me that soft focus is most effective in doing these. Perhaps he means that sharp focus is literal and does not allow for creativity of interpretation. By design or of necessity, the images created with *4 SCAN* are also soft focus. Head and shoulders portraits are the most successful *4 SCAN* subjects, although I have had some success with body studies also.

A portrait on the cover of Time Magazine will reproduce quite clearly with my printer. The pupils of the eyes will be discernible. I assume a higher resolution printer would be able to perform the same task with a half page image to the same degree of resolution.

There are several ways that I can control both the capture and printing of the image. I place a desk light about one foot from the printer to maximize illumination. I can also control how long the head stops at each location as it takes its picture (ie exposure). I have control of how many stops it makes in its trip across the page (ie resolution). In printing the picture my main control is over contrast and brightness. The closest metaphor I can think of is that I am able to with the provided software use my C-64 as a darkroom.

I have developed workarounds for my printer's resolution limitations. I was able to make a full page scan of a wallet sized snapshot of my head my using the enlarge function of a photocopier several times until it was a full page in size. I have similarly enlarged thumbnail sized photos in advertisements until they were large enough to give me a good scan. The full page that I work with is in fact 8 inches by 9.6 inches- which can be printed with the program provided at the same size. Page sized body studies as used in cosmetic advertisements or promotions for athletic activities also copy and print well at that size.

The *4 SCAN* printer program provides full page images. Most Commodore graphics programs do not approach this size. GEOS will provide nearly this size, although only a fraction of the image can be shown on screen at a time. I also have a shareware program which quadruples the size of doodles. For both doodle and GEOS, the large size emphasizes the poor resolution. Much of what I do with *4 SCAN* becomes refrigerator art. I do not own another Commodore graphics program which produce s both a large image and reasonable sharpness of picture.

A way is provided to link *4 SCAN* to other graphics formats. The graphic file created can be converted to a doodle. The doodle image can be one quarter, one half, three quarters or a full sized doodle. It is possible to import other quarter or half sized doodles to the same file. This can result in four images in the same file. Because smaller than normal doodles can be created, the file size saved to disk matches the image size. A significant amount of disk space is saved. When I change the doodle's prefix from "dd" to "rph", I am able to import it to my Runpaint program and manipulate the picture in a number of ways. The saved Runpaint image I directly use with the Illustrator version of The Write Stuff word processor. Conversion programs are available elsewhere which permit changing doodles to most other Commodore graphics formats.

Ben includes on his disk a program which converts *4 SCAN* images to a stamp format, with perforations. While he does it for humorous effects, (One of his Joe Stalin stamps carried a letter through the American postal system.), stamps do have additional uses. As a Dr. Who fan I am aware of a fan group in the United States which monthly issues fan commemorative stamps of characters from the British sci/fi television show. Apparently this practice is common among other fan groups. *4 SCAN* would appear to be an inexpensive way of creating these commemorative stamps.

I do not know of a scanner for the C-64/128 that will create a text file. Optical character recognition software would be needed, and a higher resolution than is possible with *4 SCAN.* I have written my name with a magic marker about three inches high and successfully scanned it. I import it to my word processor though as a graphics file. It cannot be edited.

The only other scanner for the C-64/128 that I am aware of is the Handiscanner. Photographs of its output that I have seen suggest that it provides quite high resolution. I doubt if it does a better job with shades of grey than *4 SCAN.* It sell s for $300. *4 SCAN* costs $70. It has been over a year since I have seen an advertisement for the Handiscanner, which was sold in North America by Rio.

Using the standard *4 SCAN* print program can provide three different appearances: standard, woodblock, and paint-by-number. Although I normally use standard, woodblock provides me with a sharper image despite the slight separation of horizontal lines typical of woodblocks. The paint-by-number version allots a different numeral to each

shade of grey- which allows interesting coloring effects.

If I owned a "full featured" printer which stopped more often than every 1/10 inches, I would be able to use a number of other *4 SCAN* features. The program can scan up to 96 samples by 96 samples. As I reduce the area scanned downwards from a full page, I increase the resolution. The smallest scanable area would be 1.6 by 1.3 inches. Full featured printers can print in two sizes: 3x3 dots to a sample or the xv dots that my system is limited to. His Extra Grafix program allows printing in seven sizes, with the height controlled separately from the width. This is the program that also allows the creation of stamps.

Ben has sold the *4 SCAN* program and hardware for $70. The conversion to doodle program costs $10. A sample disks which allows the user to print graphics files scanned and saved by Ben, and allows practice going through the scanning steps without the hardware costs $5. He is considering making the doodle format the default for *4 SCAN* and charging extra for the *4 SCAN* print program which allows large format print outs. I image at this point he has both versions available.

I have found Ben Johnson to be quite prepared to advise, read photocopies of printer manuals I have mailed to him, and suggest ways of adjusting my set up to best use his program and hardware.

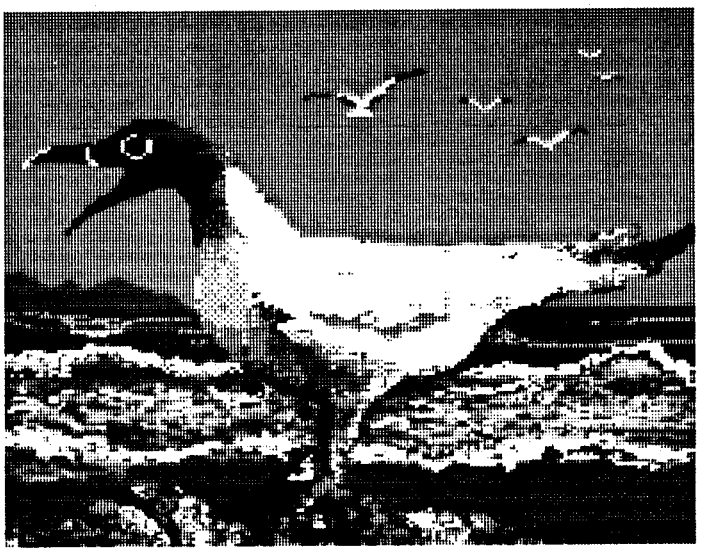
I find his scanner to be usable for many purposes, affordable, and unless the Handiscanner is still available, the only way that a Commodore user can scan an image.

4-scan system: $69.95 Doodle converter: $15.00 Extra Gfx: $15.00 Demo disk: $5.00

Mail to:

Ben Johnson
Kaltek
Adjuntas, Puerto Rico 00601-0971

Taken From The Compleat Walt disk set.



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Built-in DOS Wedge Commands

@	Display Error Channel	@C	Copy/Combine file(s)
@I	Initialize drive	@N	New (format) Disk
@R	Rename file	@S f8	Scratch (delete) file(s)
@UJ	Reset drive	@V	Validate file
@$ f1	Display directory	@#	Set default device number
/ f3	Load a BASIC program	↑ f5	Load and Run a BASIC program
% f7	Load an ML program	← f6	Save a BASIC program

Additional JiffyDOS Wedge Commands

@B	Disable 1541 head bump	@D f2	List BASIC program from disk
@F	Disable JiffyDOS function keys	@G	Set sector gap (interleave)
@L	Lock/unlock file	@O	Un-new BASIC program
@P	Toggle printer/screen output	@T f4	List text file from disk
@X	Set destination drive for file copier	*	Copy file
CTRL-A	Mark/Unmark all files for copying	CTRL-W	Mark/Unmark one file for copying
'	Verify program	£	Load and execute ML program
CTRL-D	Toggle default drive	RUN	Load and Run first disk program

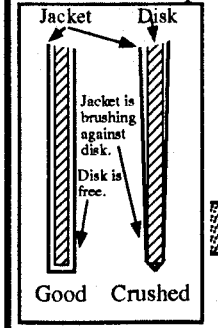
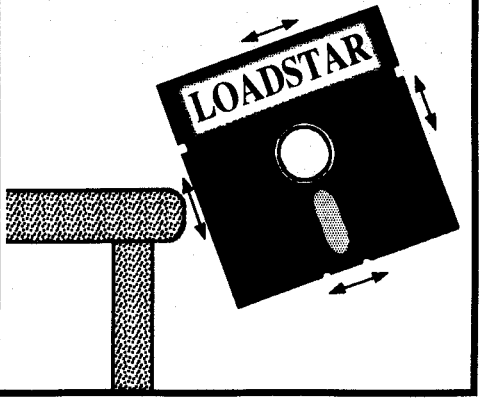
HD Series Drive Additional Commands

These new commands provide access to special HD features.

md:directory name	Make New Subdirectory
rd:directory name	Remove Subdirectory
cd:directory name	Change to Subdirectory
cp<partition#>	Change to partition (ASCII)
cP+chr$(partition#)	Change to partition (binary)
g-p<partition#>	Get information about partition (ASCII)
g-P+chr$(partition#)	Get information about partition (binary)
s-c<SCSI command>	Send SCSI commands to controller
t-ra	Read Real Time Clock (ASCII)
t-wa<new time>	Write Real Time Clock (ASCII)
t-rb	Read Real Time Clock (BCD)
t-wb<new time>	Write Real Time Clock (BCD)
t-rd	Read Real Time Clock (decimal)
t-wd<new time>	Write Real Time Clock (decimal)

DISK TROUBLE?

Every copy of LOADSTAR leaves Softdisk as a verified okay disk set. 3.5-inch disks are virtually trouble-free because they are difficult to damage, even when mishandled. Unfortunately some 5.25-inch disks may become crushed in the mail and give READ ERRORS because they have trouble spinning. Fixing these crushed disks is quite easy. Just run the areas indicated along a hard edge such as a table. This should uncrimp the disk.



Cross-section of disk